

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR DON KNABE

December 7, 2004

The County of Los Angeles has seen a drastic reduction in the amount of abandoned babies since our efforts to inform the public about California's Safe Haven Law which began in 2002. This pioneering law, allows a mother to safely surrender her baby within three days of birth at any designated safe surrender location, no questions asked.

On my motion, the Board of Supervisors created the Safe Haven Task Force with the direction to pull community leaders and children's advocates together to establish recommendations to the Board on how best to implement the Law.

On June 4, 2002, the Board approved the 12 recommendations of the Safe Haven Task Force to effectively implement the Safe Surrender Law in Los Angeles County.

Among these recommendations, the County established a 24-hour Safe Haven hotline 1-877-BABY-SAFE, designated our 157 County Fire Stations as Safe Surrender

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sites and designated nearly every city fire station in the county as a Safe Surrender Sites. These efforts have had an incredibly positive effect in making sure newborn infants are placed in safe hands instead of in dumpsters.

Since implementation, our efforts - partnered with First 5 LA, ICAN and the Children's Planning Council - have directly resulted in the safe surrender of 28 babies in Los Angeles County. We remain committed to our goal of zero abandoned babies in the County, but we acknowledge that work still needs to be done to achieve this goal.

I therefore move that the Board of Supervisors direct the Children's Planning Council to reconvene the Safe Surrender Task Force to evaluate and review the County's efforts over the last three years and establish a revised plan and set of recommendations for the County to implement to eventually reach our goal of zero babies abandoned in the County of Los Angeles and report back to the Board in 90 days.